

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

The specification has been amended on pages 7-8 to correct some grammatical and other minor errors.

Also, Fig. 7 has been amended by changing numeral "26" to -- 27 -- at all four places. Fig. 1 has been labeled as "Prior Art".

The completely constructed girder according to the present invention has an open area (cut-open portion) and the open area remains empty after the completion of the construction of the girder. That is, the open area remains empty even after the construction of the girder is complete. Therefore, according to the present invention, the second steel wires (corresponding to non-tension steel wires 27 of the disclosed preferred embodiment) having one end disposed within the open area can be tensioned later, i.e., after the completion of the construction of the girder. For example, if the bridge including the girder according to the present invention sags due to long-term use, the second steel wires may be tensioned so as to reinforce the bridge. For reference, the first steel wires (tension steel wires 26) of the present invention are prestressed during the construction of the girder and the second wires are not tensioned at all or tensioned by only a very small tension force during the construction of the girder, so as to increase the tension force of those second steel wires later.

That feature is defined by new claim 7. In contrast to the invention defined by claim 7, the recess (open area) 14 of the completely constructed girder of Crowley U.S. Patent 2,859,504 is filled with cement, mortar or grouting after prestressing the rods (corresponding to the tension steel wires 26 of the present invention) and before completion of the girder (see column 2, lines 43-47). Therefore, no rods of the girder of U.S. Patent 2,859,504 can be tensioned after the completion of the construction of the girder.

Another feature of the invention involves the non-tensioned wires 27 being connected to a common coupling member 62 (see Fig. 7) so that the eventual tensioning of those non-tensioned wires will extend from one girder end

to the other. In other words, the tension exerted in the left-most wire 27 in Fig. 7 is transmitted to the coupling member 62 and then to the right-hand end of the girder through the right-hand wires 27. That is neither performed nor desired in Crowley, because it is the express purpose in Crowley to eliminate a large portion of the prestressing near the end of the girder as stated at column 2, lines 4-50. In Crowley, each of the wires is independent of the others; no plurality of wires are connected to a common coupling member.

Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 7 and 10 and all claims dependent therefrom are patentably distinct over the applied prior art.

Respectfully submitted,

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